

REMARKS

Reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims, in view of the following remarks, are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated April 21, 2006, the Examiner rejected claim 1, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as allegedly being unpatentable over Hioki '137 (JP 8017137) in view of Brown '983 (WO 92/22983).

The Examiner also indicated that the remaining claims 2-8 are allowable.

Although Applicants disagree with the bases of the Examiner's rejection of claim 1, in an effort to expedite the examination of the present application, by this Amendment, Applicants have cancelled claim 1, without prejudice or disclaimer. In so doing, the rejection of claim 1 has been rendered moot.

All matters having been addressed, Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the immediate allowance of all pending claims.

Applicants' Counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this matter. Should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the Undersigned.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number **033975**, Order No. 008312-284084.

The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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